

The Lorax

Activities to accompany the Dr. Suess classic



Here are two activities that supplement Dr. Suess's *The Lorax* and introduce environmental sustainability ideas to NYC children.

Use these activities for:

Earth Day (April 22)

Idle-Free NYC (May 6)

Asthma Awareness Month (May)

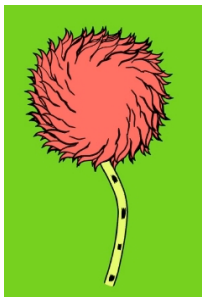
or anytime you are looking for **an innovative story hour**.



1. Language Activity – Alternate Lorax Story

Re-write *The Lorax*.

Create a storyboard that highlights each major change in the story.



2. Craft Activity – Truffula Trees and Seeds

Create a Truffula 'Idea' Tree together that can be displayed for weeks to come.

Vocabulary Words: environment, smog, pollution

Note: The Lorax can be shortened for small children by reading just the 38 brightly colored pages. Explain first that you are reading in the voice of the Once-ler, many years later, as an old man.

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Language Activity – Alternate Lorax Story

Discussion questions (right after the story):

- What was the land like before the Once-ler came?
- Did the Once-ler like the trees? Why did he chop down the first truffula tree?
- What did the Lorax mean when he said "I speak for the trees?"
- Why did the Once-ler keep "biggering and biggering" his factory?
 - What happened to each animal as he did it?
 - Bar-ba-loots
 - Swomee Swans
 - Humming Fish
- What do you think he could have done differently while still 'biggering' his business?
 - Can you cut down trees but still keep enough in the forest for the animals?
 - How do trees help the earth: plants, animals, air quality, heat, noise, etc?
 - What could the Once-ler have done differently to help each animal stay there?
- Do you think the Once-ler feels good about his decisions? Why or why not?
- What does the Once-ler say you can do with the truffula seed?
 - Could he have done this while the factory was still making Thneeds?

Activity – Alternate *Lorax* Storyboard

- Create a storyboard of what could have happened in the Truffula Forest
- Let the group steer the direction the story takes –
 - Replanting trees to sustain the land
 - Taking steps to protect the land before it is damaged or destroyed
 - Shutting down the factory when Truffula fruit became scarce
 - Containing the gluppity-glupp.
- Once the new story is complete, divide it into 4-6 pages, write the text at the bottom of large posters and let the children illustrate each page.

Adapted from: <http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/06/gk2/molson.html>

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The Once-ler arrives in the forest and loves the truffula trees.



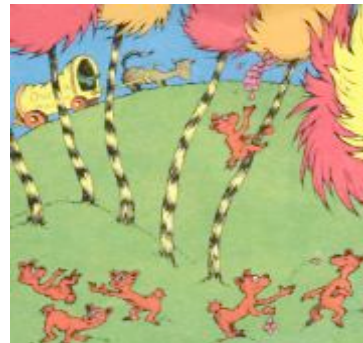
After the Once-ler cuts down the first tree, the Lorax approaches him.



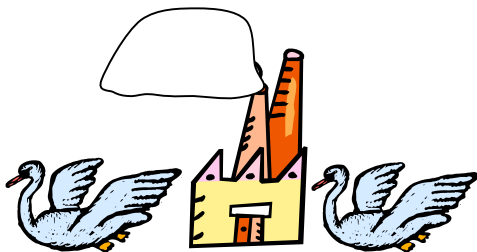
The Once-ler says he will plant one new seed for every truffula tree he cuts down.



The Bar-ba-loots had enough fruit.



The Once-ler trapped the smoke coming out of the factory so no smogulous smoke choked the Swomee Swans.



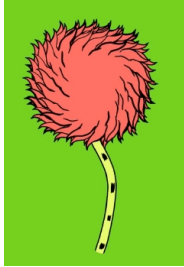
The Once-ler puts the gluppity-glupp in drums and the pond stays clean for the Humming-fish to live.



Sample Storyboard

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Craft Activity – Truffala Trees and Seeds

Read *The Lorax* as a group.

- Stop and discuss the changes to the natural resources of the land and the consequent effects on each animal in the story. (Brown Bar-ba-loots, Swomee swans, Humming fish)
- Ask who has seen a tree chopped down. What living creatures (insects, birds, animals) might have lived in that tree? Where might they have gone? What if their new home became polluted?
- Discuss the word “environment.” What makes up an environment? Ask about the environment in the story. Ask what kinds of environment the children know. Explain how “environment” is indoors and outdoors, good and bad, country and city: it is wherever we are.
- Discuss the risks presented in the book. (Ex: Thneeds demand, Truffula Tree depletion, forced animal migration and damage to the eco-system, etc.) How do they compare to our world? Discuss what might have lived on the land (underfoot) before it became a city.
- Ask about the Thneeds. What are they? What purpose do they serve? Ask if anyone would ever buy such a thing? Compare what it took to knit a Theed, versus what it takes to knit a wool sweater.
- Brainstorm how to correct problems and issues in *The Lorax* and in our world. (Ex: protecting and renewing natural resources, not dumping waste into ponds, replanting trees, keeping the air clean, etc.)
- Focusing on the city environment (or the school zone), write environmental protection ideas on the board. (Ex: no idling vehicles, no littering, no smoking, etc.)

Adapted from: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~e1willma/knowledge.html>

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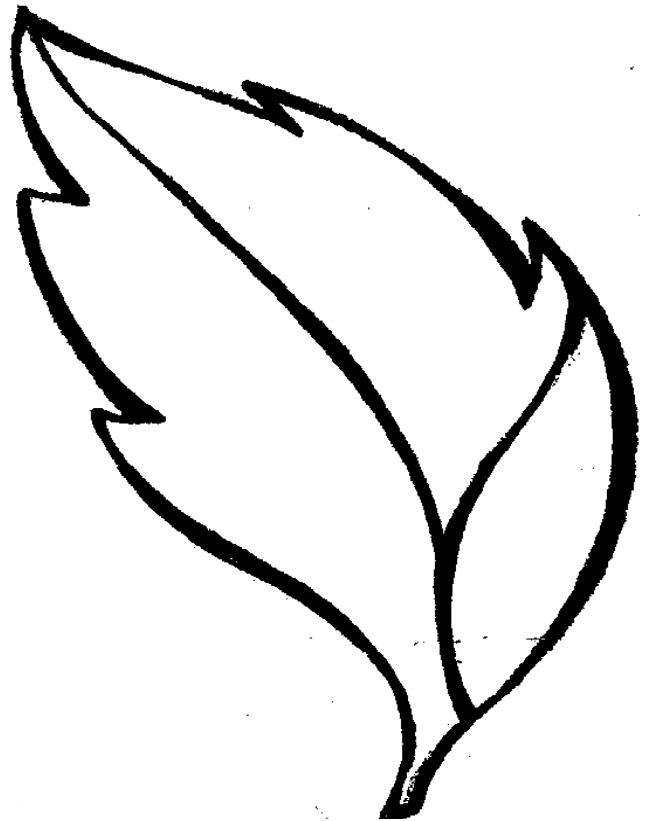


Materials

- ☑ Truffula tree trunk, prepared ahead of time
- ☑ Pre-cut multi-colored leaves (with enough room for a drawing and a couple of sentences)
- ☑ Markers/crayons/colored pencils
- ☑ Stapler (used by teacher to hang up leaves)
- ☑ Seed Worksheets

Truffula “Idea” Tree

- Create a leaf stencil (or use the truffula leaf provided) to cut colored ‘good idea’ leaves.
- On each “good idea” leaf, have children write or draw:
 - Things they love most about nature;
 - Ways to solve Lorax problems;
 - Ways protect a city environment.
- Staple the leaves onto the Truffula trunk. Talk about each idea and see if the group comes up with any more.



Seed Worksheet

- Have children compose a brief paragraph and create a picture of what they would do with the very last Truffula Tree seed.
- Hang these activities up around the room or in the hall for everyone to see and share.
- Do a seed starting activity with bean seeds in paper cups. Provide seed starter soil, water and sunlight.